EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1136

Berlin, July 13, 1939.

Subject: Dementi Issued by the Egyptian Legation with Respect to Alleged Egyptian-Turkish Alliance.

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
Mr. DUNN
JUL 25 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 22 1939
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUL 27 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the evening editions of several Berlin papers on July 7 carried the following report from the DEUTSCHES NACHRICHTEN BÜRO:

> "The Egyptian Legation in Berlin has announced as follows: 'The Royal Egyptian Minister in Berlin is authorized to deny entirely categorically the news that a military pact between Egypt and Turkey has been concluded or is about to be concluded. He is furthermore in a position to give assurances that the visit of His Excellency the Egyptian

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Foreign Minister Jehia Pascha to the Balkan countries is in no way related to any intention of supporting or strengthening the encirclement policy against Germany.'"

The implied admission, in the wording of the communiqué, that the Egyptian Government recognized the existence of an encirclement policy directed against Germany is understood to have induced certain foreign journalists to make enquiries at the Egyptian Legation. They were told there that the text of the communiqué originally handed to the German authorities in French had employed the phrase "the so-called encirclement policy", that there had been a misunderstanding as to tra nslation and that a correction in this sense had been promised by the competent German officials. Those papers which had carried the first version of the communiqué failed to make any correction but the morning papers of July 8 published the announcement with the insertion of the word sogenannte, or "so-called", in its proper place before the phrase "the encirclement policy against Germany".

In actual fact the incident caused by mistranslation seems to have made little practical difference inasmuch as the Berlin press of July 8 appears to have drawn sufficient satisfaction from the amended text of the communiqué. The BOERSEN ZEITUNG of that morning commented that the announcement was necessary, and might even have been made earlier, in order to prevent interested British circles from placing a tendencious misconstruction upon the Balkan visits of the Egyptian Foreign Minister. An

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editorial in the DEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG of July 8 guardedly attributed ulterior motives to the Egyptian Foreign Minister's trip as first planned and ascribed the change which had taken place in his original intentions, and which, it was hinted, inspired the communiqué issued in Berlin, as being due primarily to the salutory effects of the Bulgarian Premier's discussion
1/ in Berlin. There is enclosed a translation of this editorial which discusses also Germany's conception of the role which Bulgaria may usefully play in the Balkan League.

Respectfully yours,

Alexander Kirk,
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

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Copy to Embassy, London.

Copy sent mail

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No.
of July 13, 1939, from Embassy, Berlin.

SOURCE: DEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE
ZEITUNG,
July 8, 1939.

(Translation)

Whereas the suggestive though not exactly seasonal simile of the Moscow iceberg that will not melt was coined in London during this summer characterized by British ill humor, an obvious comparison with Germany's good neighbor policy in the southeast and in the northeast practically forces itself on one. After all, the point at issue in conversations such as those which it was possible to carry on in such a friendly and positive spirit on the occasion of the Bulgarian state visit which has just come to an end is simply to keep a channel of confidence open and free from ice in Europe when the nations round about are in danger of becoming torpid as a result of the aggressive distrust of the "peace front". If the simile were not quite paradoxical when applied to a hot country like Egypt, it might be sa id that the denial with which the Egyptian Legation in Berlin has just countered the rumors of a contemplated military pact with Turkey and participation of the Cairo Government in the "so-called encirclement policy" was an outspoken indication of the beneficial thawing effect of the German-Bulgarian conversations. For, while Dr. Kiosseiwanoff was renewing the old friendship in Germany the Egyptian Foreign Minister, whose recent visit in Ankara and Athens had given rise to alarming conjectures as to an upheaval in the relationships in the Eastern Mediterranean, passed through Sofia on his way to Belgrade as the bearer of genuine, uninfluenced, purely economic "good will", so

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he claimed. So it would seem that after all the Balkan Union will not have to take up the subject of Egypt's adherence at its summer discussions to be held next month. Such adherence, taken together with a military pact between Cairo and Ankara, which Egypt so distinctly denies in Berlin, would fit in perfectly with the typical ring formation of the British encirclement idea. That leaves only the old subject of Bulgaria's relation to the Balkan Union, which in turn can only be regarded in conjunction with the Bulgarian-Yugoslav friendship. As far as Germany and Italy - specifically mentioned with the others in the final Berlin report - are concerned, agreement between the two southern Slavic countries mea ns a positive event of importance, as we wrote when welcoming Prime Minister Kiosseiwanoff. After all, it constitutes a fixed quantity from which Bulgaria can continue to get its bearings and to play its part as a factor in the system prevailing in southeastern Europe which, as a matter of sentiment and from the point of view of the laws of political common sense, Germany attaches importance to seeing strengthened. One might even go farther and include the relaxation of tension between Yugoslavia and Hungary; the natural result would be in the direction of the channel of confidence, free from ice, mantioned at the beginning of this article, leading from the German and the Italian frontiers to the southeast.

AC/mhg

Central File: Decimal File 767.8311, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Political., Turkey And Egypt, War. Peace. Friendship. Alliance. Non-Aggression., July 13, 1939. 13 July 1939. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1930-1939. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111394423%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 21 June 2025.